241 Baningha (large white millet or sorghum).

These two types are grown for food, [247] although the large white millet is especially reserved for horses in well-to-do households.

[262 273] Kazinga (large red millet). As a food the poorer Mossi prefer this to the baningha, but it is more especially grown for the making of dam, millet beer.

[556] Mouí (rice) is sought only by the chiefs, notables, and a few families of dakangba (well-to-do men).

Benga (beans).

Souma (peas of either the small green variety or large white or red ones).

Niouyan (from niouri, "yam"), grown only in certain areas.

Nangouri or sounkama (peanuts).

Pèsça (fabirama) [a tuber plant].

Sinni or sili (sesame), grown only by a few people who like it.

Bito (sorrel), used in preparing the sauce served with sagbo.

Mana (gombo [okra]) is also cultivated.

Aside from its food crops, each family has its own plot for cotton (lamdo) which provides for the clothing needed during the year.

311 178 I am told that fields are much more extensive today than in former times, in spite of the abolition of slavery. This is explained by the fact that many areas supposed to be haunted were formerly left uncultivated. It is said, however, that the Moaga used to grow larger crops since in those days he was closer to the soil.

[248] At the present time there is a lack of farm hands. As [857] recently as twenty years ago, the young Moaga followed his parents to the field as soon as he was six or seven years old. He took a liking to the work at a very young age. Before the French [484] occupation, the Moaga rarely left his village because of the dangers on the roads, frequented in those days by bandits (usually descend- [579] ants of naba). People were even afraid to go into the bush alone, for fear of being attacked, captured, and reduced to slavery.

433 178 There was little contact even between adjoining villages. At Ouagadougou, no one ventured from section to section unless he had very good reason and was armed to the teeth. In short, everyone

326 iron bar on an iron stump planted in the ground or on a stone. Copper
306 and zinc are smelted in small clay crucibles, the size of which varies with the desired thickness of the bracelet. The bracelet is first made in wax and coated with well-kneaded clayey earth which acquires the same shape. The wax is then removed with boiling water, and copper is poured into the clay mold. With a crude file the jewelry-maker removes the dross which clings to the metal, polishes the bracelet, and carves designs into it. The most skillful among them make attractive twisted ornaments of iron and red and yellow copper. One Ouagadougou Christian, deft at modeling wax, makes all sorts of objects, such as napkin rings, paper weights, inkwells, figurines, etc., which are not lacking in style.

● 484 The Mossi have always travelled a little, and they used to go quite regularly to Timbuktu; now, thanks to the French peace, journeys have become increasingly frequent. The European settlers in Tenkodogo, Ouagadougou, Léo, and Koudougou hire the Mossi as house boys and [464] take them to Ségou, sometimes to Kayes, and even to Saint-Louis. These boys, when they return, fill their friends with wonder and arouse their desire to take such great journeys also.

484 The recruitment of Black troops has also fostered this desire to see
464 new lands. Many natives have made the trip to Bandiagara to enlist as riflemen; others went to Kati, and when they found that no further enlistments were being made there, they went on to Saint-Louis.

484 During the dry season the Mossi are more often lured away by trading ventures. In October and November many young men who have managed to secure a sheep or two or a few goats and the wealthier natives who own cattle organize caravans in the hope of selling their livestock at a profit in faraway markets. In former times the Yarsé and Haoussa had a monopoly on trade. Nowadays the Mossi compete [651] with them, for they must find money to pay taxes to the Whites, the 648 famous five-franc piece. /60/ Besides, now the roads are safe. Highway robbers are no longer to be feared, and one no longer has to pay tolls every time he enters the territory of a new chief. From this point of view, and from it alone, the French peace is valued by the natives, although they find it onerous to pay taxes, to build roads and bridges, and to pay customs duties on leaving and re-entering French territory. Is a man ever pleased when something is required of him, even for his greatest good?

491 Now only the watercourses present some difficulty when they are full. The Administration, which does all it can to facilitate trade,

491 builds bridges, but as they are made exclusively with materials found in the country, forked sticks and beams covered with pounded earth, the first swelling of the water carries the whole structure away, and after a heavy rain one must wait for the waters to subside and resort to ferrymen who justifiably charge for their work.

481 The ferrymen proceed as follows. The person who wishes to cross holds on to a thick beam, a gourd, or a simple clay jar, which holds
● 484 him out of the water; sometimes two large sticks under his arms serve
501 as a life belt. In a few places rafts are available, made of sticks connected with séko and covered with dry grass. The ferryman swims next to him and prevents him from being carried too far by the current. At certain favored fords near the French posts, ferryboats are available.
484 Livestock swim across, and the ferryman holds their muzzles out of the water to prevent them from drowning. These crossings take a long time and add up to considerable expense, and animals are often carried away by the current or snatched by crocodiles. Woe to the man who dispenses with ferrymen, if he is not familiar with the bottom of the river and the strength of the current! He often drowns, and those whose aid he scorned do nothing to help him. On the other hand, if the caravans postpone their departure for too long, the rivers will be dry, the grass burned off, and the animals will die of hunger or thirst, or they will arrive at the markets exhausted and lean and will sell poorly.

These journeys thus entail a number of hazards; in addition, although imported goods sell high, living expenses run equally high, and if a profit is to be made, one cannot grow fat along the way. He will make up for it when he returns to the village.

442 The need for middlemen brings other hazards. Lt. Marc, who was well qualified to discuss the subject because he was twice in command of the Léo Post, described the situation as follows: "The livestock upon arrival is bought by interpreter-brokers, middlemen between the butchers and the meat merchants, to whom the caravaneers are practically forced to resort. These men buy all the kola nuts brought by the forest natives and control the market prices... These interpreter-brokers apparently speculate on livestock in a most curious way. They have scouts who go out to meet the caravans, sometimes two days' march to the north. /61/ These scouts attempt to alarm the cattle owners with tendentious remarks, until they are willing to cede their herds at a low price. Sometimes, at the height of the business season, in January and February, livestock prices may fluctuate by one

442 hundred percent within a few weeks. The Mandé-Dioula vie in eloquence, the Yarsé and Mossi in politeness, the Haoussa in friendliness. In fact, with exclusively native methods, this is a trading center in embryo, a veritable stock exchange." (4)

4. Marc, Au pays des Mossi /In Mossi Country/, p. 173.

484 The traders travel in all directions. The roads most commonly
487 followed are those which run from Ouagadougou south to the Gold Coast, to Gambaga, Daboya, Salaga, Kintampo, Sékondi; from Léo through Oua and Salaga; and from Tenkodogo through Bitou to rejoin the Gambaga road. Contact also occurs, though less frequently, with German Togoland and the markets of Sansané-Mango and even Lomé on the coast.

439 These two British and German colonies are supplied with livestock and native fabrics by the Mossi. They completely lack butcher's meat, for the tsetse fly does not permit cattle to survive within the confines of the rain forest. Imported fabrics do not withstand a few washings, so the native fabric strips, although less bright in color, are preferred by the Gourounsi and forest dwellers. They formerly wore only a sheep or goat skin, but they have taken to clothes since the arrival of the Europeans. Their scant clothing does not embarrass them when they are among themselves, but they are ashamed when Europeans see them. The Mossi bring back from their journeys the kola nuts which are the basis of their import trade, but they also bring copper, European goods of all sorts, fabrics usually of inferior quality, matches, perfumes, pearls, sugar, and basins of all shapes and kinds. Trade is very active in the coastal areas, and Lt. Marc writes on the subject as follows: "The Gold Coast administration, which commands a network of posts denser than ours, recorded in 1904 and 1905 about 16,000 beeves and 75,000 sheep or goats coming from Mossi country. Considering that the Mossi also supply in part the Togoland markets and the Boudoukou market, their annual export may be estimated at a minimum of 20,000 beeves and 100,000 sheep. Their kola nut imports amount to at least 500 tons." (5)

5. Marc, op. cit., p. 178.

439 from the south, bracelets, and fabric strips, and they import salt and hoes. Often they take only money with them and return with salt bars which sell on the market for one to one and a half, sometimes even two francs, a kilogram. Around Fada N'Gourma (Binge /sic/ to the natives), Say, and Niamey, Karite butter, locust bean flour, and especially kalro pellets are exported, while onions, garlic, and sometimes horses are imported. There is no trade with Dahomey.

484 The natives travel in short stages of 20, 25, or at most 30 kilometers a day. They set out at dawn or whenever the moon sheds sufficient light and stop when the sun becomes too hot. They set out again when the sun dips on the horizon and stop in time to prepare a meal if their wives accompany them, which is rare, or to buy something to eat if they are alone. They spend the night with a friend if [574] they /63/ have one in the locality and lengthen or shorten their day's march if they expect to find an acquaintance in a certain village. The livestock feed as they walk, and donkeys carry the exchange goods and especially the kola nuts on the way back.

482 Nearly all travellers bear part of their load on their head. Since we have come to mention this, let us again quote Delafosse: "Portage has been much slandered in France these past few years. It has been cited as a barbarous custom, a form of slavery which we had supposedly introduced in Africa and imposed on the unfortunate Negroes. This merely proves that the French people like to discuss things of which they know little. The very first geographers and travellers who spoke of the Sudanic Negroes—Herodotus among the Greeks, El Bekri among the Arabs—said that beyond the Sahara, where horses and camels cannot stand the climate, the natives themselves carried burdens on their heads over very long distances." (6) These remarks

6. Delafosse, Le peuple Siéna/ The Siena People/, p. 53.

are strictly true. Abuses on our part lie in forcing the pace and making the natives run with their loads in the hot sun or in exceeding the regulation weight. If reasonable limits are observed, the Blacks accustomed from infancy to the bearing of heavy burdens on their heads—in their country, everything is carried in this fashion—are no more to be pitied than our soldiers burdened on long marches with

482 their pack, their full cartridge pouches, and their gun. This is proved by the fact that it is very easy to find volunteer porters nowadays who [465] agree to carry a box weighing 25 or 30 kilograms for 200 or 400 kilometers, or even farther, for half a franc a day.

[492] The fabrics are coiled into huge rolls which hang on either side of the ox or donkey, or, when the man carries them himself, they are [285] folded in baskets from one and a half to two meters long, made of bamboo stems slit lengthwise in two. These baskets are semi-cylindrical in shape and are used to carry kola nuts on the way back. A small pillow is attached to the center of the basket, and when the traveller stops to rest, he looks for a thick tree, leans one tip of the [481] basket on the crotch of two branches and the other tip on the bamboo he uses as a staff. He can thus pick up his load effortlessly when the resting period is over.

● 484 The traveller always returns to his village at night to avoid those prying persons who would rush out to see what he brought back. The goods are carefully put away, and on the following day the man takes up village life as though he had never left it. It is only gradually, at the evening gatherings, that he relates his adventures. At the first subsequent festivity, however, he dons his new, bright clothes and a red tarboosh, sometimes stockings and shoes, and proudly displays them. Those who have tasted /64/ the life of travel and adventure cannot do without it, and they set out again every year. Some of the independent and carefree young men even live all winter on the [178] profits of their distant journey and no longer cultivate the soil. This is shocking to the elders, who do not understand it at all but are aware that something has changed in their country.

600 Some Europeans have attempted to engage in livestock trading like the natives. One enterprising and courageous European settled in Ouahigouya, and another near Mané; a trading house sent one of its representatives to Ouagadougou, and a Syrian settled there. None of them seems to have succeeded. We are not in their confidence and cannot say just why this happened, but would it not be, at least in part, because a European cannot easily adapt himself to the native way of life? The Blacks manage to make a profit because they do not spend much along the way; they subsist on very little and carry part of the goods themselves instead of hiring porters. Also, the natives

439 We must add without further delay, however, that it is not the Mossi who do this trading but the Yarsé we know so /538/ well, and the Haoussa settled in Mossi territory. Mossi trade, therefore, is not really Mossi, or at least it was not in the past. If it has now begun to be to some extent, it is thanks to French settlement in the territory.

439 After conquering Mossi lands (1896), indeed, we levied a tax
651 on the population. This tax, low at first, rose rapidly over the last few years. In 1906 it amounted to 311,000 francs in the Ouagadougou circle itself, for a population of 861,000 inhabitants. In 1907 it rose to 366,000 francs, in 1909 to 555,000 francs, in 1910 to 656,000 francs. Furthermore, beginning in 1908, it was exacted with so much strictness and on such short notice that it was exactly as though its amount had been increased threefold. Under the circumstances, the Mossi were forced to take to trading in order
[436] to secure the French money they did not have, since the local currency is the cowrie and the French administration will not take it. They were forced to go and sell their oxen, even their cows, something the Black will only consent to do when hard pressed and in the direst need. In short, the Mossi now organize small caravans on a village basis. Local young men are sent in groups to Ouanké to
[484] sell cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, local horses, and cotton strips. They bring back either French currency or kola nuts. When they bring nuts, they go and sell them at Saraféré or Sofara and get salt or 5-franc pieces. In other words, the Mossi are taking to trade, owing to a pressing need.

439 The Mossi, nevertheless, may hardly be regarded as a trader. He has been one for an extremely short time, and he is not much of a trader yet.

To summarize, there is a strong current of exchange trading in Mossi territory from north to south and south to north. There are also important market towns in the territory, or rather large market villages, as we already know. This exchange trading and those important markets, however, are the creation and achievement of the Yarsé and of a small number of Haoussa. The Mossi themselves, in the past, had no part in all this, except /539/ for the fact that the

M H 441 439 484

The journey takes six months from the time he leaves Ouagadougou to the time he returns. On his way to the Gold Coast he needs no bearers. He merely takes a Peuhl to herd the cattle, and provides him with food and 300 cowries a day, plus 1 franc on arrival per head of cattle herded.

Our trader stays with another Haoussa from Ouagadougou, another trader of course, who is wealthier than he. He does not pay rent, but offers him gifts from time to time in return for his hospitality.

His family lives at Iko in Haoussa territory, and consists of three wives and three children. He goes and sees them every two years.

M H 441 439

We can see that the Haoussa do their trading in grander and more forceful fashion than the Yarsé. They do not hesitate to expatriate themselves in order to carry out their trade, and in this fashion they have actually colonized southern Nigeria, Dahomey, Togoland, the Gold Coast, Mossi country, etc. Once settled there, they carry their trading operations farther than local merchants, and they hardly do anything else. While the Yarsé is an example of cultivator-trader, the Haoussa of Mossi territory is in most cases an example of pure trader who specializes completely in trading. This is why he towers above the whole trading structure of the country. Bent on gain, a speculator in cowries and French currency, more intelligent than the Mossi and Yarsé, he amasses large fortunes.

M 567 439

In order to be quite thorough on the subject of present and past trading in Mossi territory, it should be added that formerly the slave trade was carried out alongside that in livestock, cotton fabric, kola nut, and salt. The slaves came chiefly from Gourounsi, /541/, Boussansé, and Kipirsi lands. The Djermabé /Zerma?/, especially, sold slaves to the Mossi in very large numbers when they pillaged Gourounsi territory. This trade, like the others, was in the hands of the Yarsé and Haoussa.

M 839 439 304

Let us also add a word about the now-abolished eunuch trade. Formerly, the Mossi furnished some to the Haoussa, who forwarded them to Turkey via Egypt. The operated men were Gourounsi sold to the Mossi by the Zaberma and by their chief Baba-Tô. Some Mossi villages specialized in this kind of work. The village of Koubry,

252 This is how their methods of preparation differ. To make to or sarabout, one simply leaves the millet flour to cook in boiling water, stirring occasionally with a piece of wood or a spoon. To make couscous, on the other hand, one takes a canari, fills it with water, sets it to boil on the fire, and then puts the millet into a gourd which is perforated at the bottom and thus makes a sort of strainer. This gourd is placed over the canari where the water is boiling, and covered with a straw dish. The steam emanating from the canari comes through the holes into the gourd, and since the latter is covered the steam remains there a long time. The millet flour is thus cooked by steaming. At the end of a period of time, the gourd is removed and its contents are left to cool and to dry in the sun. Once the millet flour has thus been cooked and dried, it will keep /560/ almost indefinitely. It is eaten either with water or with milk, which is better, or else, if one has some meat, by boiling the latter and pouring the sarabout into the pot.

The Mossi may not be familiar with couscous, but they are familiar with vessala. This method of preparing millet consists of boiling the flour as it is boiled for sarabout. The difference lies in the amount of flour used. When the mush has been cooked it is allowed to cool, and then fresh or curdled milk is bought and mixed in with it. This kind of mush is made only for the purpose of mixing [171] it with milk. The Bambara are familiar with vessala and call it by name of fisan or finsan.

484 252 171 The Mossi, when they are traveling, often cook millet grains which have not been reduced to flour. This is called honandourou-ki ("cooked millet"). The Bambara call it niobalabala, the Foulbe m'baĭna-gaouri, the Sarakolé ilé-n'kioro, and all these words have the same meaning. This method of preparing millet is quite unusual, and is resorted to only when the time or means to reduce millet grains to flour are lacking.

[462] 273 Mossi women also make dolo (dama). To do this, they soak the grains of large red millet in water for two days, and then expose them to the sun and crush them. The flour is boiled for two hours, and then strained and boiled in the necessary amount of water for a whole day. This is transferred to another canari and allowed to cool.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

8. Cf. Marc, p. 156.
9. Cf. Fortes, pp. 258–71.
10. Skinner, "The Diffusion of Islam," pp. 659–69.
11. Tauxier, *Le Noir du Soudan*, pp. 585–86.
12. Dim Delobson, p. 205.
13. Crozat, p. 4820.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 4822.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 4835.
16. Binger, I, 452.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 456.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 452–56.
19. Archives, Document 15G-190 (1897–98). Instructions left to Captain Scal by Destenave, June 1897.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Marc, p. 17.
2. Barth, III, 595. Although it is possible that the Wolof prince Bemoy did hear about the Mossi, he was mistaken about the name of their ruler. Interestingly enough, the title "Ogane" is not too dissimilar from Hogon, the title of head men among the Dogon (Habe or Kado) whom the Mossi had pushed into the hills of Bandiagara. Cf. Bascom, p. 24.
3. Barth, III, 606.
4. Bowdich, p. 180.
5. Dupuis, Appendix CVII.
6. Clapperton, II, 323.
7. Barth, III, 643–49. As cited earlier, Barth states that the Portuguese got reports about the Mossi in the year 1533 "from the wrong side, namely from Benin." This may not have been altogether "the wrong side," however, for Barth gives us data on caravans from Mossi country to Sansane Mango in Togoland that indicate how news about the Mossi might have traveled from the interior to Benin city in Nigeria.
8. Koelle, p. 6. Dixon, who seems to have been one of the few captured Mossi sold to the West, reports: "Mose is west of Gurma, east of Andemtenga, where a different language is spoken. Mose is also two days journey from Butmera, where the same language is spoken; four days from Bulega [Bolga tanga], the language still the same, and confederate with Kambonse, i.e. Asante; two days from Ysongo, with still the same language; six days from Bosanse which is at enmity with Mose and where people bore their lips, and often tie them together with grass, and whose language is different from Mose; four days from Busma also a different language, and in which country there is a very high mountain (Tanga) from which those who ascend never come back again [probably a reference to Plimpikou, the Mossi holy mountain]; three or four weeks from Kambonse, i.e. Asante. Kupeala is four days from Wardyga [Ouagadougou] the Mossi capital, whither the king of Asante often sent presents; and one month from Salak [Salaga], an Asante town, where they bring kola nuts."
9. Marc, p. 30.
10. Great Britain, Parliamentary papers xlvi, 1882.
11. The people of Nobere, Manga, and other districts surrounding Bere have traditions about Krause, who is remembered as the first white-skinned person ever seen in those parts. The color of his skin was attributed to the fact that, "like the fish," he had come out of the sea.
12. Krause, pp. 92 ff. Although there is no evidence to this effect in the literature, it appears certain that Mossi government officials knew of Krause's visit. They treated most travelers in the following manner: "After entering a town the party is given in charge of a man usually termed 'housemaster.' It is his duty to exercise surveillance over the action of the stranger and to report the result to the authorities. . . . The trader conducts his business through his 'housemaster,' who usually makes a handsome gain by acting as middleman (G. E. Ferguson, quoted in Wolfson, p. 199).

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

Barth was "a well-frequented market place of Mosi, and of greater importance than all the other towns of Mosi; the governor's name is Nabere Gager. The inhabitants are celebrated archers." Barth states that by the fifteenth day, or two days later, the caravans usually arrived at Wagadougou, but he tells us in a note that:

> Other people, in going slowly from Kulfela to Woghodogho, spend eight days on the road, sleeping the first night in Pashipanga, the second in Tangay, the third in Zorogo, the next in a place ruled by a man called Mane Bogonje, the fifth in another village called Tangay, and reach Woghodogho on the eighth. (Marc 1909 : 27)[8]

Finally, he reports that another spur of this caravan route ran from Tengkodogo to Sansanne Mangho, in what is now Togoland. This journey took five days.

The second caravan route described by Barth ran from Djibo, the capital of the province of Gilgohi or Jilgodi (about 60 miles south from Montdoro, 55 miles West-Southwest from Aribinda and 35 miles South-Southwest from Tinie) by way of Kaya, to Mane and finally to Wagadougou. A caravan leaving Djibo entered Kelbo, the first village of the territory of Mossi on the eighth day, but according to Barth the "border district in general is regarded as very unsafe." On the fourteenth day the caravan entered Kaya;

> ... an important place where several roads meet. And from Kaya the route went to Wagadougou by way of Boussouma, Mane and Yako. It took a caravan ten days to traverse it.[9]

The third major caravan route that Barth described lay entirely within Mossi country. It ran from Mane to "Yadega" (probably Wahigouya, the capital of the kingdom of Yatenga) by way of Yako, and it took a caravan eight days to travel it. The fourth caravan route lay between Mane and a place called Kong by way of Tema, Yako, La and other places. On the tenth day a caravan reached Kong;

> ... a large place, according to my informant, inhabited by Bambara. It can scarcely be identical with the well-known Kong, if the itinerary be correct; but nevertheless it may be the case.

The first day after the caravan left Kong to return to Mane, it

(8) Barth received fairly accurate information about the caravan routes, and Marc was impressed with his data. Nevertheless, Marc finds it impossible to believe that caravans took two days to travel the twenty-five miles between Tengkodogo and Koupela, and only two more days to travel the ninety odd miles from Koupela to Wagadougou. Barth obviously erred here, but the timetable he gives for those persons "going slowly" from Koupela to Wagadougou appears to be quite correct.

(9) It is highly unlikely that a caravan going to Wagadougou from Kaya would have gone through Mane and Yako unless the caravaneers were interested in tapping the resources of these two western towns before heading straight south to their destination.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

people also assemble sheep of
the Mossi variety, which are very puny. The larger variety of long-haired Macina sheep are seldom exported. Once the livestock has been assembled, the chief of the caravan would also provide himself with cotton bands. This native fabric has often been described; it is commonly used on the caravan routes to pay for the food of the travellers. (Marc 1909 : 172)

Most of the caravans through Mossi country traveled as much as fifteen or twenty miles a day. They left at the first sign of dawn, traveled steadily until the heat became too intense, and then stopped to rest. They resumed their march when the sun was midway between the zenith and the horizon, and then stopped at some village or stream for the night. This schedule was followed on the next day if the caravan was far from a market center, but in the vicinity of a large market the caravan might remain stationary as many as six days while its merchants traded for more livestock or merchandise. This being the case, it is difficult to gauge how long it took the caravans to make the journey from Salaga in Ghana to Timbuktu. Our best data come from an analysis of Krauss' itinerary. He left Salaga with a caravan on July 7, 1885, heading north through Walwale, and arrived in Bere, a distance of some 250 miles (today's road mileage) towards the end of August. Famine delayed the caravan at Bere for some time, and he did not complete the 50 miles or so to Wagadougou until September 24. He remained in the Mossi capital until October 26, some thirty-two days, before his caravan headed north again through Tema, Yatenga and Bandiagara. Krauss does not tell us when he reached Douentza, some 400 miles northweast of Wagadougou, or how long he remained there, but on December 7, a few days after he had left Douenzta on the last 200- or 250-mile leg of his voyage to Timbuktu, the Moro Naba ordered him to return to Wagadougou. It is possible that it took Krauss' caravan some thirty-five odd days to make the trip from Wagadougou to Douentza. His return to Wagadougou took him only about thirty days, since he arrived there on January 7, 1886. He apparently had to wait some fifteen days there for a caravan going south, because he did not leave the Mossi capital until January 22, 1886 (Krause 1887–88). Judging from this itinerary, it probably took caravans between five and six months to travel from the forest zones to the desert, a distance of about a thousand miles at the most. This averages about six or seven miles a day, with the normal stops for rest and marketing, instead of the fifteen or twenty miles a day which the average caravan covered when it was on the road.

The caravans did not encounter many dangers or difficulties during their voyage. When the caravaneers had friends along the way they stopped at their friends' homes for the night, and when they camped in uninhabited places men were posted to protect the goods and livestock against marauding beasts and thieves.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

territory. This report is substantiated by Barth. Marc adds that the caravaneers had

> . . . a considerable amount of incidental expenses. Ten thousand kolas called for two asses or four porters for whom it was necessary to provide food during close to two months. Formerly there had been a certain number of local exactions to pay each time that the caravans crossed a new country. Now there are taxes on the caravans in the Gold Coast and also in French territory. It is also necessary to pay for ferryman who transports the livestock across the Volta [River]. There are risks, and occasionally cattle, fatigued by the trip, arrive in such bad shape that they are sold more cheaply than they had cost. Finally, the realization of profits is often difficult, the kola market being, in the commercial centers of the Mossi, subject to considerable fluctuations at the time when the caravans return. (Marc 1909 : 174)[7]

Sometimes the caravaneers made extensive use of middlemen and did not realize all the profits. Marc, who was stationed at the customs post at Leo on the Mossi border with the Gold Coast, wrote:

> The livestock is bought upon arrival by interpreter-brokers, middlemen between the butchers and the meat merchants, to whom the caravaneers are practically forced to resort. These men buy all the kola nuts brought by the forest natives, and control the market prices . . . These interpreter-brokers apparently speculate on livestock in a most curious way. They have scouts who go out to meet the caravans, sometimes two days' march to the north. These scouts attempt to alarm the travellers with tendentious remarks, until they are willing to cede their herds at a low price. Some times, at the height of the business season—that is, in January and February—the livestock prices may fluctuate by one hundred per cent within a few weeks. The Mande-Dioula vie in eloquence, the Yarse and Mossi in politeness, the Hausa in friendliness. In reality, there is here, an embryonic trading center, a veritable stock exchange, using extensively indigenous methods. ((Marc 1909 : 173)

According to most reports, all the larger market centers of Mossi country were like this.

Caravan centers, like all the lesser market centers in Mossi country, provided merchants not only with trading opportunities but also with occasions for conviviality after hectic days of travel. At Dakay, south of Wagadougou, livestock traders found musicians, singers, and the most beautiful dancers in the country. And according to Marc, during the whole caravan season the market was abundantly furnished with beer (Marc 1909 : 175). But if the Mossi enjoyed themselves at

(7) Tauxier (1912 : 539) states that each porter was paid 35 francs for the thirty-five days of travels or at the rate of one franc per day. In addition a caravaneer spent about 300 cowries a day on food for each of his bearers.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

such individuals to find a market everyday in one neighboring district or another.

Every Mossi market not only has its own schedule but is also part of a cycle of markets in the sense that its main customers can and do regularly attend two other markets on the two nonmarket days without missing their "own" market. Table 30 takes the district market at Nobere as the home market and lists the markets which Nobere's people can attend and the reasons they themselves give for going there.

TABLE 30

Markets near Nobere

		Distance Away	*Reasons for Going*
First Day:			
	Nobere		Home Market
	Manga	12 kilometers	Good Pottery
	Vooko	15 kilometers	Butter and Millet
	Twese	20 kilometers	Millet and Sorghum
	Binde	35 kilometers	Good Pottery and Mats "Very far and people do not go there very often"
Second Day:			
	Basgana	10 kilometers	Good Pottery
	Sakouliga	15 kilometers	"To Have Fun"
	Giba	10 kilometers	"To Have Fun"
Third Day:			
	Nobili	27 kilometers	"Good Millet"
	Pinse	6 kilometers	"Small Market; to have fun"
	Parougre	10 kilometers	"Good Millet and Pottery"

Nobere people scarcely ever go to Manga because the market there conflicts with their own and its one unique product, pottery, can be bought at Basgana on a day when there is no market at Nobere. A person is likely to go do Vooko when he wishes to buy butter and millet at cheaper prices than he can obtain in his own market. But he scarcely visits the Binde market unless he is there visiting a friend or relative. Nobere people think nothing of going to Giba or to Pinse to show off their clothes or to have fun at those markets. If any commodity is cheap there they take advantage of the prices, but in general they believe that they can obtain better and cheaper products at their own market.

It is now possible to find a great variety of products at Mossi markets, and the larger the market the more varied its merchandise. Apparently this was not always so. Crozart (1891 : 4848), who visited the country just before it was conquered, reported that in the market at Wagadougou, he found "millet, rice, millet beer, butchered meat, small cutlery, morocco-leather goods, basketwork and jewelry items,